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EDITORS
CAROLINE B. BOURLAND HOWARD R. PATCH
ERNST H. MENSEL MARGARET ROOKE
ALBERT SCHINZ

THE GENESIS OF THE THEORY OF "ART FOR ART'S SAKE" IN GERMANY AND IN ENGLAND
PART II

BY

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NORTHAMPTON, MASS.
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PARIS
LIBRAIRIE F. CHAMPION

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PREFACE

For the benefit of those who have not read recently the first in my series of articles on *The Genesis of the Theory of "Art for Art's Sake" in Germany and in England*, I shall give a brief résumé of it.[1] The paper had two sections, the first dealing with the history of the term *art for art's sake* and with a working definition of it as used in the second half of the nineteenth century, and the second with the growth of a new concept of a work of art (*Kunstwerk*) in Germany around 1800.

Section I

History of the term. It was pointed out that the first use of the phrase *l'art pour l'art* was not ascribed rightly to Cousin in 1818, nor to Victor Hugo in 1829, but according to recently discovered evidence should be tentatively attributed to Benjamin Constant. In the latter's *Journal Intime*, published for the first time in 1895, an entry for *XII le 20 pluviose* (February 10, 1804) employs the term in its modern sense.

In England, the equivalent phrase *art for art's sake* was probably not accepted so early, though the idea is to be found in an unpublished passage of the *Reminiscences* of Henry Crabb Robinson, relating a conversation with Winkelmann[2] in 1801. The earliest use of the term yet found in print is in a letter written by Thackeray in 1839 to his mother. This, however, was not published until 1894.

Working definition of the term, as used in the second half of the nineteenth century. This definition obviously must ignore the clashes of opinion within the school and emphasize only those elements which may be regarded as fundamental and generally recognized. The leading doctrines are:

I. All *l'art pour l'art* men are to be known by their common aspirations—freedom for the artist, and order and beauty in his creations. Where these conditions exist in combination, true works of art are produced.

II. Art has its own distinct sphere, in which no one but the artist is sovereign. Consequently, he can neither rule nor serve elsewhere.

[1] *Smith College Studies in Modern Languages*, vol. II, No. 4.

[2] I am indebted to Professor Ernst Mensel of Smith College for pointing out that the acquaintance to whom H. C. R. referred is not the great critic of art who was killed in 1768, but in all likelihood a lesser known person, a physician and a man of culture.

III. Form is the distinguishing and unique quality of art. In this connection it is necessary to notice:

A. That when the artist aims at any objective other than perfection of form, he denies his own right to create, and trespasses upon the domain of others.

B. That form as used by these men is not to be confounded with the popular meanings of the term, where it is opposed to content and regarded as something separable, in fact or in thought. They regard it as appearance only, an outward manifestation of an imaginative conception, whose beauty is dependent on the perfect correspondence of this concrete manifestation to the vision within.

C. That since form in this sense is the very essence of art, it follows that *expression*,—that is, "the finer accommodation of speech" (or of other media) "to the vision within,"—is the prime task of the artist.

IV. Where "expression" is the means to the end, the responsibility for its perfection lies wholly with the artist. He can find his sole guide and his most exacting mentor in his own artistic conscience.

V. A true artist belongs to no school and respects no groupings among others. He is concerned with his individual vision, not with the common qualities implied in movements favoring classicism or romanticism, realism or idealism. Conversely, he has esteem for others who respect their own inspiration, no matter how far apart their points of view are from his.

VI. The true artist works without regard to the effect his creations may have upon others. His end is solely the aesthetic perfection of each work of art. Consequently, the percipient who considers it rightly must regard it in itself, in the spirit of contemplation.

SECTION II

The rise of a new concept of a work of art (*Kunstwerk*) in Germany around 1800 brought with it attending variations in the connotations of the terms art (*Kunst*) and form (*Form*). Although many of these changes came before Kant, the emphasis has been placed on his theories and on those of his contemporaries or immediate successors, because the major developments in a theory of *art for art's sake* began with him.

I. Kant's chief contributions to the new concept of a *Kunstwerk* were:

A. The theory that a work of art is the product of the imagination working in harmony with the understanding; that is, of

the free creative power finding restraint and form through voluntary surrender to the spirit but not the control of the concept-making faculty.

B. The rigid distinction between a work of fine art as made by an artist and a work of craftsmanship as made by an artisan:

1. The artisan produces something in accordance with a pattern or type; the artist ignores types and creates unique products, which by their very individuality and richness suggest ideas richer than those implicit in concepts.

2. The former is constantly assisted by rules or formulae laid down for his own and others' guidance; the latter usually ignores them, as imposing restraint upon his imagination.

3. The former is limited by a purpose, the end for which his product is designed; the latter ignores a purpose in his endeavor to manifest his conception in its wholeness.

C. The theory that a work of art is not a beautiful *thing*, but a beautiful *representation* of a thing; its characteristic quality is form.

D. The theory that a work of art has "purposiveness without purpose." A work of craftsmanship is to be recognized by its conformity to an end both in its author's intention and in its owner's use: a work of nature is regarded as adapted to definite ends only when its form is disregarded, and its substantial character is considered; a work of art, as pure form, is incapable of being put to use in this sense. Kant, it is true, does make a new category of "dependent beauty" to include the beauty of a cathedral, of a garden, and of other commonly accepted works of fine art, which are of definite service to men. But however beautiful they may be, he excludes them from pure works of art, such as a poem, a statue, a painting.

He goes further in his elimination of purpose in art so as to include that which may dominate the mind. Does a work of art exist to give gratification, satisfaction, agreeable sensations? If it is so regarded, he taught, its full effect as such is ignored and its appreciation limited to a single side. If, on the other hand, the percipient's mind is open to its full effectiveness, he will realize in contemplation that a work of art, like a work of nature viewed as form, will stir in him, as an individual, thoughts of its many possibilities. His reaction, however, is purely subjective and is not to be accounted as final or definitive. But through the capacity of a poem, for example, to

produce this impression upon the reader, will come his recognition of it as a true work of art.

II. Schiller's contributions to the new connotation are:

A. The doctrine that a work of art is distinctly not a work of nature nor a pure representation of the ideal. Its province is between nature and mind, reconciling in play the divergent and actually irreconcilable characteristics of each sphere. Without a work of art, men would find no escape from chaos and sensuality on the one hand, or pure thought and indifference to life on the other, except through the medium of the barren concepts of the understanding,—barren, because they ignore sensation, feeling, and also, the existence of the ideal.

B. The doctrine (developed from Kant's theory of art as representation) of art as *form* or aesthetic appearance. By this Schiller means that a work of art must never be regarded as an imitation of nature, nor as a serious presentation of ideas, but as the representation of an imaginative vision in which the real and the ideal in semblance exist in harmony. But it is only an appearance and must be regarded as such, having no validity as substance or doctrine.

C. The theory that the artist's sole task is destroying all matter in his work, so that it will become pure form and nothing else.

III. Goethe's contributions:

A. As a convert from Storm and Stress, Goethe found his chief task in later life in distinguishing a work of art from a work of nature. He emphasized the following differences:

1. Nature never attains perfection because it is always in the process of development; art must attain the perfection implicit in the conception. It is this achievement of the highest possibilities inherent in his conception that Goethe calls *form*.

2. Nature is to be known for the variety and complexity in the organic structure of its units, but since it is often the victim of untoward forces, it seldom attains completeness and integrity. In art, however, this organic unity is imperative. A great work of art is to be recognized not only by its achievement of this unity of the manifold but by its maintenance of the life principle within. The attainment

of *living form*, "giving life to the whole" Goethe regarded as the end of art.

B. As a consequence of these theories, he taught that the summit of art is to be found in the *execution*. Subject-matter, its source and its quality, in his theorizing are often, (though not always,) matters of comparative indifference; the execution is invariably regarded as paramount.

IV. Schelling's contributions:

A. This philosopher's aesthetic system rests on his differentiation of art and philosophy, both of which he regarded as valid but distinct methods of approach to the Absolute.

B. Since, in his theory, the validity of each is dependent on its freedom from interference from the other, it follows that neither the method nor the ends of philosophy are desirable in art. Consequently he eliminated from the domain of art *Schematismus*, that kind of representation where the particular is to be known through the general, and *Allegory*, where the general is to be recognized in the specific instance. He defined true art as symbolic, or "the synthesis of the two, where neither the general signifies the particular, nor the particular the general, but where both are strictly one."

C. He called this artistic quality, which is evident where contraries are reconciled, *Indifference*. It is the dominating quality of a true work of art. When it is present, the body and soul of the work cannot be distinguished, nor the form and the matter, nor the ideal element and the real. Consequently art is necessarily neither of the world of time or eternity, but in a world of its own, independent, self-sufficient and self-subsisting.

The Genesis of the Theory of "Art for Art's Sake" in Germany and in England. Part II

Rose Frances Egan

THE NEW CONCEPT OF AN ARTIST

It has already been shown in my discussion of a new conception of a work of art arising in Germany around 1800 how the term *art* lost the connotation it had carried since Horace, and acquired a *sixième sens*, especially in the phrase "work of art" (*Kunstwerk*).[1] It is my intention now to show how that disintegration of an old concept, allied to other influences, affected the notion of the producer of a work of art (*Künstler*). It was not until after Batteux and Lessing, as well as others, had endeavored to find both the common principle of all the fine arts, and the distinguishing characteristics of each species, that the term *Künstler* gained the significance of maker of any fine art. But at the very time that this change was being effected in the scope of the concept, other content was being given the term by the new aesthetic philosophy. How far apart in meaning the word "artist" (*Künstler*) was as used in 1766 from that in 1799 may be seen in the two passages that follow. The first is to be found in the *Schleswigsche Litteraturbriefe* and was written by Heinrich W. von Gerstenberg. To him an artist is one who conforms to a pattern called art. He is discussing Sophocles and Corneille: "The latter shows the *artist*,[2] the former a Greek. We can all be *artists*,[2] but how rare a Greek!"[3] Compare this to Goethe's use in his 1799 *Notes on Dilettantism*, where the dilettante is he who conforms to the pattern and the artist the one who escapes from its confines: "In opposition to the general maxim, the dilettante will thus be subject to more severe criticism than the *artist*,[2] who, resting upon a secure basis of art,

[1] *Smith College Studies in Modern Languages*, vol. II, No. 4, pp. 5-61.

[2] The italics are mine.

[3] *Litteraturdenkmale d. 18 u. 19 Jahrh.*, vol. XXIX, p. 15: "Jenes zeigt mir den Künstler, die letztern den Griechen: Künstler können wir alle werden—aber ach! wer ein Grieche wäre."

incurs less danger in departing from rules, and may even by that means enlarge the province of art itself."[4]

In this connection it is essential to notice that the *l'art pour l'art* men of the nineteenth century, whose progenitors we are seeking, seldom referred to themselves except as artists or men of taste, and on these grounds only demanded the privileges of independence and self-direction. It is possible that they might have been more widely understood if they had claimed genius or inspiration or even poetic madness as the source of their power, for the belief in the irresponsible and in the guided poet still prevailed, especially in Germany and in England. As it happened, their claims to autonomy as artists were generally misapprehended and seldom received even a sympathetic hearing from the masses of men. Part of the difficulty, it is true, was the result of the average man's failure to keep step with the march forward in artistic theory and in changing connotations of its terms, and of his consequent proneness to think of an artist only as a technician or stylist; but another and large part was owing to a common aversion to the individualism fostered by the new critical philosophy and to its implicit pluralism. Has the theory of the special spheres of religion, of morals, of science, of art, any validity? Has the artist sovereignty in his own domain? Is he, when acting as an artist, subservient to no power from without and rightfully obedient only to his own artistic conscience? And above all, has he the right to force his personality upon us, to show us life through his peculiar temperament and not, as seems to have been the practice of artists in the past, through the vision of the best thought of the time? These were the questions which were and are asked frequently by intelligent opponents of *l'art pour l'art*, and which indicate how deep are the roots of a doctrine upheld, often unintelligently and unphilosophically, by members of this school.

In this paper it will be my hope to show that these roots are to be found—not exclusively, it is true—in German critical and aesthetic philosophy from Kant to Friedrich Schlegel and Schelling.

[4] Weimar ed., Pt. I, vol. XLVII, p. 319: "Gerade der allgemeinen Maxime entgegen wird also der Dilettant einem mehr rigoristischen Urtheil zu unterwerfen sein als selbst der Künstler, der, weil er auf einer sichern Kunstbasis ruht, mit minder Gefahr sich von den Regeln entfernen und dadurch das Reich der Kunst selbst erweitern kann."

There we shall discover formulated much earlier than in the school of Flaubert and Pater, doctrines of the autonomy of the artist, of the validity of the artistic conscience within its own sphere, and of the necessity of originality or peculiarity in a work of art. In the analysis of the first two, I must give credit to Gustav Lanson, who has already marked out the main roads of those who would trace the philosophical origins of nineteenth century *l'art pour l'art*. The third, I hope to show, is equally significant and essential to our comprehension of the movement as a whole.

It is often stated that the theory of *art for art's sake* had its ultimate origin in opposition to the critical formalism of the neo-classic period. M. Lanson attacks[5] this assumption in Cassagne's work on *La Theorie de l'Art pour l'Art en France* because, he argues, the movement which was headed by Victor Hugo, and which aimed at freeing the form from the domination of the rules, should not be confounded with the real *l'art pour l'art* drive which came later and whose objective was the freeing of the content from the restrictions which time and theory had placed upon the fitness of certain subject-matter for art. It is not within the scope of this paper to consider the specific problem raised by M. Lanson, but it is clearly not beyond its prerogatives to show what doctrines Kant and others regarded as inimical to the free art they were upholding.

In a few words, they were two: that the artist should be guided by his understanding and its categories rather than by the free activity of his imagination; and, at the other extreme, that he should follow his genius, his natural impulse, in repudiation of all law. Both theories according to Kant and his followers honored the reverse of the truly artistic process. Both, in anticipation, violated the Kantian formula which came to be accepted, with variations that did not destroy its essential significance, as the final description of the state of artistic creation, "Imagination's free conformity to law."[6] That law in art, to Kant, received its sanction from the Understanding, the faculty of concepts, and to his followers, from the Reason (*Vernunft*), the faculty of ideas, is not, as I hope will be clear, ultimately as important a distinction as it seems at first sight. For they were one in their opposition to

[5] *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France*, 1907, pp. 163-7.

[6] *Kr. d. Ur.*, I, 1, Buch 1, *Allgem. Anmerkung*, *Werke*, Hartenstein, Leipzig, 1838-9: " . . . . die freie Gesetzmässigkeit der Einbildungskraft."

the seventeenth and eighteenth century rules, and to the vagaries of Storm and Stress.

Now, it goes almost without saying, that the Understanding, in Kant's definition, was responsible for the formal rules guiding literary art in the neo-classic period and for the dictum which demanded that nothing exist in art which was not pleasing to its categories. It was because of this situation that the critic assumed a dictatorship in that age, and that external law was accepted as final by most of its literary men. It is clear that these laws had to them practically the same sanction as science has to the masses to-day; and that they governed the universal practice of men, because they arose out of "common sense," Voltaire's "*jugement profond.*" They were comprehensible, therefore, not only on grounds of authority but on those of the best experience of the race and of its consensus of opinion.

With the coming of critical philosophy, however, and its change of the center of interest from custom and tradition to that of individual discovery, and the categories of Freedom and Nature, the rules of the understanding and the authority of the literary critic gradually gave way. Aesthetically considered, Kant's primary function was to remove a *Kunstwerk* from the domination of abstract universals. "Nature," he said several times, "must give the rule to art."[7] It is not a clearly defined rule of the understanding to which he referred. "It (the rule) cannot be reduced to a formula and serve as a precept, for then the judgment upon the beautiful would be determinable according to concepts."[8] "Genius," which in his definition is essential to an artist, "is a talent for producing that for which no definite rule can be given."[9] A work of art that has only regularity to commend it will not entertain long: "Nay, rather it will impose a burdensome constraint upon the imagination."[10]

[7] e.g.: *Kr. d. Ur.*, Sec. 46: "Dass die Natur . . . . der Kunst die Regel vorschreibe."

[8] *Kr. d. Ur.*, Sec. 47: "Sie (die Regel) kann in keiner Formel abgefasst zur Vorschrift dienen; denn sonst würde das Urtheil über das Schöne nach Begriffen bestimmbar sein."

[9] *Ibid.*, Sec. 46: "Man sieht hieraus, dass Genie ein Talent sei, dasjenige, wozu sich keine bestimmte Regel geben lässt, hervorzubringen."

[10] *Ibid.*, I, 1, Buch 1, *Allgem. Anmerkung*: " . . . ihn der Gegenstand nicht länger unterhalte, vielmehr der Einbildungskraft einen lästigen Zwang anthue."

A chance remark of Schiller's shows us how dead an issue was the authority of the rules in German philosophical circles in 1795. In his dedication of the *Aesthetic Letters* he wrote, "The liberty of action you prescribe is rather a necessity for me than a constraint. Little exercised in formal rules, I shall scarcely incur the risk of sinning against good taste by any undue use of them."[11] Elsewhere he spoke of the "fetters of rule"[12] and of "the harsh restraint of rules."[13]

It is to be noticed that Goethe and Friedrich Schlegel often wrote of new rules, "objective rules," but these are in no sense the old formal rules guiding technique, but "laws" as they believed, in the Kantian sense, subjectively discovered and necessarily of universal validity. Goethe wrote scornfully of the dilettante, who "subjects himself to the necessity of working by false rules . . . because he does not understand the true objective rules."[14] Beauty, according to Friedrich Schlegel, is equally independent of the control of necessity and of the rules.[15] The artist, who obeys the fundamental laws of beauty and the objective rules of art, will in all other respects be unconditionally free.[16]

At the same time that they decried formal rules, they denounced with even greater emphasis the lawlessness that characterized the productions of the Storm and Stress men. The ghost of formalism had partly been laid in the *Geniezeit*, but the other and equally dangerous one of *Gesetzlosigkeit* stalked in its place. Where the Age of Reason had emphasized law as necessarily operative in artistic creation, and had, as a result, deprived the artist of freedom, the *Geniezeit* had by its theory of genius, of a human creative power that, by obedience to instinct, operates as efficaciously as the creative power behind nature, rejected all

[11] *Brief* I, *Sämtliche Werke, Säkularausgabe*: "Die Freiheit des Ganges, welche Sie mir vorschreiben, ist kein Zwang, vielmehr ein Bedürfnis für mich. Wenig geübt im Gebrauche schulgerechter Formen, werde ich kaum in Gefahr sein, mich durch Missbrauch derselben an dem guten Geschmack zu versündigen."

[12] *Ibid.*: "in die Fesseln der Regel."

[13] *Brief* IX: "in den schweren Fesseln der Regel."

[14] *Über den Dilettantismus*, Weimar ed., Pt. I vol. XLVII, p. 302: "Er setzt sich in die Nothwendigkeit nach falschen Regeln zu handeln, weil er ohne Regeln auch nicht dilettantisch bilden kann und die ächten objektiven Regeln nicht kennt."

[15] *Jugendschriften*, Minor ed., vol. I, p. 110. "Das Schöne . . . . welches von dem Zwange des Bedürfnisses und des Gesetzes gleich unabhängig . . . . "

[16] *Ibid.*, I, 153. See note 72.

law and order in art. The earlier age held that only by an author's obedience to critical dicta could his poetry have art; the later one taught that artlessness is the chief element of literary beauty. Herder, at one time the philosopher of the Storm and Stress movement, contended that lyric poetry is the antithesis of art, because it is all nature.[17] The new school, guided by Kant, combined their forces in attacking what they believed to be a fallacious conception.

It is significant, however, that, though they derided what Friedrich Schlegel called the idolatry of genius *in mystischen Orakelsprüchen*[18] and emphasized the unphilosophical character of the *Sturm und Drang* conception of the blind and irresponsible genius, they did not reject the main elements of the theory of original genius. We shall see that the term as used by Friedrich Schlegel and by Schelling is not equivalent to that as used by Herder or by Hamann, but compounded also of elements discovered by men of the group we are now discussing. But their aversion to instinctive genius was general.

Even Schiller and Goethe, in spite of earlier ties with the Storm and Stress group, were bitter opponents of the doctrine around 1800. Kant, however, was the leader of the attacking party. "Shallow heads," he wrote in 1790, "believe they cannot better show themselves to be budding geniuses than by throwing off the constraint of all rules: they believe, in effect, that one could make a braver show on the back of a wild horse than on the back of a trained animal."[19] He implied that the original geniuses of his day had succeeded in producing much original nonsense,[20] and he asserted that when a choice is to be made between an artist without genius, or one without taste, he decidedly preferred

[17] This is the burden of Herder's criticism of Denis's translation of Ossian. *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. V, pp. 159-207.

[18] *Jugendschriften*, vol. I, p. 90.

[19] *Kr. d. Ur.*, I, 1, Sec. 47: " . . . . . so glauben seichte Köpfe, dass sie nicht besser zeigen können, sie wären aufblühende Genies, als wenn sie sich vom Schulzwange aller Regeln lossagen und glauben, man paradire besser auf einem kollerichten Pferde, als auf einem Schulpferde."

[20] *Kr. d. Ur.*, Sec. 46: . . . . "dass, da es auch originalen Unsinn geben kann, seine [des Genies] Producte zugleich Muster, d.i. exemplarisch sein müssen"; also, *Kr. d. Ur.*, Sec. 50: "Denn aller Reichtum der ersteren (die Einbildungskraft) bringt in ihrer gesetzlosen Freiheit nichts als Unsinn hervor . . . . . "

the former as more cultivated and more capable of approaching beauty in his work.[21]

"Nature," wrote Goethe in 1798, "is separated from art by an enormous chasm which genius of itself is unable to bridge without external assistance."[22] He praised the lawful artists at the expense of the lawless ones who never attain to the summit of art.

To this chorus, Schiller added his voice. "Genius," he said, "borders very closely on savage coarseness, . . . it is a light which shines readily in the midst of darkness, and which . . . often argues against, rather than in favor of, the taste of the time."[23] Their attitude is summed up well by Friedrich Schlegel when he wrote, "Instinct is a powerful stimulus, but a blind guide."[24]

In these objections to the fundamental doctrines of the two leading schools of literary art in their own day, we have an explanation of why the Kantian group gradually discarded *genius* and accepted *artist* as the title by which their ideal producer was to be known. As they developed without reference to the artistic species, whether it be poetry, painting, sculpture or music, a concept of a work of art of which the characteristic element is form, the soul of the matter, or the body through which the soul was revealed, they likewise developed a theory of its creator, an artist, who is responsible for this form and who works to this end, not under orders from without, nor as a slave to a blind natural impulse, in servitude neither to authority nor to instinct, but in freedom and in order because he is bound only by laws that are self-discovered and self-imposed.

[21] *Kr. d. Ur.*, Sec. 50: "Wenn also im Widerstreite beiderlei Eigenschaften an einem Producte etwas aufgeopfert werden soll, so müsste es eher auf der Seite des Genies geschehen; und die Urtheilskraft, welche in Sachen der schönen Kunst aus eigenen Principien den Ausspruch thut, wird eher der Freiheit und dem Reichtum der Einbildungskraft, als dem Verstande Abbruch zu thun erlauben."

[22] *Einl. in die Prop., Sämtliche Werke, Jubiläums Ausgabe*, vol. XXXIII, p. 108: "Die Natur ist von der Kunst durch eine ungeheure Kluft getrennt, welche das Genie selbst, ohne äussere Hilfsmittel, zu überschreiten nicht vermag."

[23] *Brief* X: " . . . . . dass es am nächsten an die Wildheit grenzt und ein Licht ist, das gern aus der Finsternis schimmert, welches also vielmehr gegen den Geschmack seines Zeitalters als für denselben zeugt."

[24] *Jugendschriften*, vol. I, p. 97: " . . . . der Trieb ist zwar ein mächtiger Beweger, aber ein blinder Führer . . . . "

The basis of this theory of an artist, as one who discovers objective law through freedom, is found in the Kantian categories of Nature and Freedom with their consequent implications of necessity and totality, as forces making for the development of humanity. Man is a creature of Nature and is therefore dependent; he is also mind and therefore in search of complete independence. Between things as they are, the natural world about him, the nature within him, his senses, his passions, his human needs, the time and age in which he lives, the social life about him, all the manifold powers which mold him into being but which represent pressure for which he is not immediately responsible, but to which he may easily be a slave and victim: between all this that we call Nature, and the world of ideas,—that is, the sum of his desires and aspirations, since only in it can he obtain release from nature, detachment, and liberty,—he is swung, oftentimes longing for freedom yet bowed down by necessity, choosing one or the other voluntarily or involuntarily, but in so doing losing the totality of his being and the serenity and happiness of his spirit. As a bridge between the two worlds, Kant supplied the moral law and its Categorical Imperative; in Duty as the bond between Freedom and Necessity he saw the possibility of Reason (*Vernunft*) becoming efficacious in Nature. He gave a work of art a place between nature and mind, because to him it represented the product of the imagination's free conformity to the law of the understanding. To the *artist* as the one who bridges this gap he granted nothing. His freedom is the gift of genius and not an act of the will. He is merely one of Nature's favorites, greatly inferior to the scientist and infinitely below the moral man. Nevertheless, that it is out of Kant's categories of Nature and Freedom that the new theory of the artist as one who reconciles freedom and necessity arose, I hope to show.

The theorist who was responsible for the exaltation of the artist, especially of what he called the aesthetic state, the essential prerequisite of the creation of art or of the enjoyment of it, was Schiller. He, too, was interested in the problems of man's totality and highest efficiency or happiness, and he, too, saw the difficulty in reconciling worlds as antithetical as those of Nature and Freedom. His point of departure from Kant, however, was not in his estimation of the ultimate value of the moral man, but in his estimation of the value of the means whereby the highest morality—

or perhaps better, humanity—is attained. The Categorical Imperative is defective, humanly speaking, according to Schiller, because it denies the validity of sense and of feeling in the life of the perfected man, and so forbids his attainment of totality. Is there any condition, he asked in effect, where all that is natural, where the richness and variety of the sensible and emotional worlds can be united to the purity and splendor of the Ideal and One? Is there any condition where there is freedom from the tyrannous activity of the reason's search for order and unity at the expense of life and feeling, and at the same time from the sense world's susceptibility to chaos and disorder and destruction of form? Can feeling and thought, the sensible and the spiritual, the transitory and the eternal ever be made one?

Schiller's answer was both negative and affirmative. No, if we look seriously for the actual passing over into each other of the essential qualities of each sphere, for they can never exist together. Reconciliation which is union is unthinkable. But that they can be reconciled in consciousness, in the mind of man under certain circumstances, is the premise on which Schiller's system rested. He called this condition the aesthetic state, as opposed, on the one hand, to the logical or moral state, and, on the other, to the physical state.

Man is in the physical state when nature draws him or moves him. Savagery is not the only condition in which he may be the puppet of nature, for civilization also creates bonds which draw as tightly. The reformer, moved to tears and passion by the sight of human misery, is no freer than the epicure who finds his chief delight in tickling his palate. Man is in the logical or moral state, when he breaks with nature and discovers in thought or in choice the perfection of which he has dreamt. By so doing he has denied the appeal of the sense world, and the guidance of inclination or desire. To Schiller, the latter state though often necessitated in heroic spirits who must give example to men and lead them forward, is not that of true freedom because humanity's right to harmony and happiness is sacrificed.

It is only when man is in the aesthetic state that he is really free and really man. When nature has its appeal and yet does not dominate; when mind is active and efficacious but not destructive of nature, of feeling and sensation, the soul of man is not only in high harmony but alive with creative energy. Until feeling and thought

exist in equilibrium as in the aesthetic state, they are not robbed of their capacity for constraint, or of their determinableness. When they are balanced, man becomes self-determinable and genuinely free. Only in this condition does he have autonomy, is he actually self-moved and free from pressure of any sort. Indifference is also a quality of his consciousness because he has reached the state where nothing is wanting and nothing is superfluous. Neither desire nor disgust can affect him. Serenity and highest satisfaction prevail.

But Schiller went farther than this. The theories of "wise passiveness" and "ardent listlessness" which were drawn later from similar premises held no fascination for him. To him, the charm of the aesthetic state was that it promoted free activity or play. When the will is freed from determinations, it logically followed, according to his reasoning, that it should seek action. But since man in the aesthetic state is self-barred from the world of nature, he cannot copy the life about him; and since he is self-barred from the sphere of Reason, he cannot create ideas or pure forms. Imitation or philosophizing are beyond his possibilities. The will so freed must find activity in a world of its own, one pure, distinct, and apart from all others. And this is the world of appearance, in which the artist, and the artist alone has sovereignty, in which he alone is creator. His imagination (*die Einbildungskraft*, i.e. the power of representing as one, an interpenetrative power as Schelling afterwards remarked[25]) stimulated by the aesthetic state, self-determined by his will, freed from all external constraint, creates works of art, aesthetic appearances, in which, in semblance only, the eternal and immutable form unites with the richness and vitality of nature. We have already seen that "living form" (*lebende Gestalt*) was the ideal of Schiller's *Kunstwerk*, for it is only in art, he believed, that form dominates without destroying life.

Artistic autonomy, as conceived by Schiller is the result then of two conditions, the attainment of the aesthetic state and the consequent exercise of the imaginative faculty. It has been shown how in the aesthetic state only, the essential prerequisite of artistic creation, Schiller found man wholly free in that he is

[25] *Ph. d. K.*, *Werke*, vol. V, p. 386: "Das treffliche deutsche Wort Einbildungskraft bedeutet eigentlich die Kraft der Ineinsbildung, auf welcher in der That alle Schöpfung beruht."

self-moved; it remains to indicate that he has also taught that within the domain of appearance, in the activity of his creative imagination, the artist alone is legislator and critic. At first sight we shall find that the situation is an anomalous one, for Schiller's theory of creative imagination imposes freedom within limitations upon the one man whom he regarded as wholly free. He declared that it was one of his functions to show that that which the world called "limitation" was from his point of view "enlargement," indicating thereby how clearly he himself realized the difficulty. Nevertheless, he frankly stated his thesis that the true artist must respect the limits which are necessarily imposed upon him by the exercise of his imagination. If he trespasses on the domain of nature by imitating reality or relating his work to it, or if he abandons the realm of appearance to enter that of thought, he has yielded to constraint, destroyed his freedom and sacrificed the integrity and imaginative quality of his work. A recognition of the limits of the imagination requires that it accept guidance not from the senses, the feelings, the understanding or the reason (*Vernunft*) but from itself alone. As for the true artist, Schiller wrote, "nothing can be sacred to him but his own law; the only condition imposed upon him is to respect the border which separates his own sphere from the existence of things or from the realm of Nature."[26] Elsewhere he added that we shall deserve the reproach of not knowing true Beauty, i. e. "pure appearance," so long as, among other reasons, "we do not grant to imagination an absolute legislation of its own."[27]

In the main Schiller's doctrine of artistic autonomy was accepted by his immediate successors, and even more definitely applied. There were, however, essential variations. It was to be expected of a philosopher such as Schelling that he would differ from Schiller in his estimation of the value of the aesthetic state and of the imagination, in spite of the fact that in its general outlines and in many of its details he accepted each description. For to him there were two approaches to the Absolute, through the

[26] *Brief* XXVI: "Nichts darf ihm hier heilig sein als sein eigenes Gesetz, sobald er nur die Markung in Acht nimmt, welche sein Gebiet von dem Dasein der Dinge oder dem Naturgebiete scheidet."

[27] *Ibid:* "Diesen Vorwurf werden wir solang' verdienen . . . . . als wir der Einbildungskraft noch keine eigene absolute Gesetzgebung zugestehn."

reason (*Vernunft*) and through the imagination. The processes were the reverse of each other, but the ends and the conditions—those of freedom within limitations—were the same. "For each entity we demand a particular and free life," he wrote in the *Philosophy of Art*. "Only the understanding subordinates; in the reason and in the imagination everything is free and moves in the same atmosphere without interference and without friction. For everything that is independent is in turn the whole."[28]

Goethe as usual saw this from the side of literary practice. In a conversation with Eckermann he discussed the limitations of the French and doubted the freedom and boldness of the Germans when it came to a question of the acceptance of the inherent differences between understanding and imagination. "I wonder what German critics will say?" he asked in reference to his own *Helena*. "Will they have freedom and boldness enough to get over this? Understanding will be in the way of the French; they will not consider that the imagination has its own laws, to which the understanding cannot, and should not, penetrate."[29]

It is significant to notice how far these men carried Schiller's doctrine of appearance. It is true that on account of a growing Platonism some of them, such as Goethe, especially in his mid-career, and Schelling, tended to emphasize art's service to idealism and so made way for later advances in this direction, particularly for that regarding art as synonomous with concrete idealism, a movement which ended in a cleavage from the school of *l'art pour l'art*, but in general, in their emphasis upon the complete interpenetration of the sensible and intellectual worlds in art, they maintained Schiller's influence. Schelling's doctrine that true art is symbolic and not schematic or allegorical, as already ex-

[28] *Ph. d. K.*, vol. V, p. 393: "Wir fordern für jedes Ding ein besonderes und freies Leben. Nur der Verstand ordnet unter, in der Vernunft und in der Einbildungskraft ist alles frei und bewegt sich in dem gleichen Aether, ohne sich zu drängen und zu reiben. Denn jedes für sich ist wieder das Ganze."

[29] *Gespräche*, Linden, vol. I, p. 178: "Mich soll nur wundern . . . was die deutschen Kritiker dazu sagen werden; ob sie werden Freiheit und Kühnheit genug haben, darüber hinwegzukommen. Den Franzosen wird der Verstand im Wege sein, und sie werden nicht bedenken, dass die Phantasie ihre eigenen Gesetze hat, denen der Verstand nicht beikommen kann und soll." Cf. F. Schlegel, *Jugendschriften*, vol. I, p. 120.

pounded, is a confirmation of this statement.[30] Nevertheless, their common efforts were most largely expended on keeping art free from the intrusion of the real, or the vulgar, or the commonplace.

It was indeed difficult to combat the doctrine of the Storm and Stress group that a work of art is but another work of nature, particularly because Kant had given the same characteristic to each of "purposiveness without purpose." As a matter of fact, he had insisted that there is also a fundamental difference between a work of art and a work of nature: "A natural beauty is a beautiful *thing;* artificial beauty is a beautiful *representation* of a thing."[31] By this doctrine he had prepared the way for Schiller's theory of artistic appearance, but because he had emphasized the imagination's relationship to concepts—richer it is true than those of logic —he had not completely destroyed the neo-classic belief in the dependence of art upon nature, nor wholly refuted the *Sturm und Drang* conception of the intimate relationship between the two. It was Goethe's as well as Schiller's function to withdraw a work of art completely from the realm of nature.

"A work of art," Goethe wrote in 1798, "can seem to be a work of nature only to a wholly uncultivated spectator . . . But, unfortunately, he can only be satisfied when the artist descends to his level; he will never rise with him when, prompted by his genius, the true artist must take wing in order to complete the whole circle of his work."[32] And again, in his introduction to the *Propylaea*: "The genuine law-giving artist strives after artistic truth; the lawless, following a blind instinct, after the appearance of naturalness. The former leads to the highest pinnacle of art, the latter to its lowest step."[33] "No portrait," he said elsewhere, "is worth anything until the painter has literally made it a crea-

[30] *Smith College Studies in Modern Languages*, vol. II, No. 4, pp. 54-5.

[31] *Kr. d. Ur.*, Sec. 48: "Eine Naturschönheit ist ein schönes Ding; die Kunstschönheit ist eine schöne Vorstellung von einem Dinge."

[32] *Über Wahrheit und Wahrscheinlichkeit der Kunstwerke*, vol. XXXIII, p. 88: "Nur dem ganz ungebildeten Zuschauer kann ein Kunstwerk als ein Naturwerk erscheinen . . . . Leider aber nur so lange, als der Künstler sich zu ihm herablässt, wird jener zufrieden sein, niemals wird er sich mit dem echten Künstler erheben, wenn dieser den Flug, zu dem ihn das Genie treibt, beginnen, sein Werk im ganzen Umfang vollenden muss."

[33] *Einl. in die Prop.*, vol. XXXIII, p. 116: see previous article, p. 51.

tion."[34] "Does it not follow," he questioned, "that truth of nature and truth of art are two distinct things, and that the artist neither should nor may endeavor to give his work the appearance of a work of nature?"[35] Imitation of nature is possible when the artist is young and in the mechanical stages of his training, but not when his powers are ripened. Those who pursue it to the end are men "of quiet, true, limited nature,"[36] but in no sense true artists. The genuine artist, he could not repeat too often, is to be known by his freedom, by his power to transcend the influence and guidance of nature, without denying its validity in its own sphere, and without sacrificing it as the medium by which the imagination may become creative.

A cardinal objection to dependence on nature was that through it the artist ignored reality and placed the emphasis upon the accidental. If the artist cannot distinguish between nature and art, wrote Schelling, "if it were his wish to subordinate himself to nature, and to repeat things present with a slavish fidelity, he would produce masks (*larvae*) indeed, but no works of art."[37] Such imitation of the externals of nature was to Goethe not only the destruction of art, but the acceptance of vulgarity. "The accidental real in which we cannot at once discover natural law or freedom, is called the vulgar,"[38] was his ultimatum on this question.

Again, art spurns dependence on nature, for reality as we know it is a matter of time; art as the daughter of Freedom knows no time. "Art," said Schelling in his treatise on the Plastic Arts,

[34] *Der Sammler und die Seinigen, Brief* VI, *Werke*, vol. XXXIII, p. 180: " . . . . Kein Porträt kann etwas taugen, als wenn es der Maler im eigentlichsten Sinne erschafft."

[35] *Über Wahrheit*, p. 88: "Sollte nun nicht daraus folgen, dass das Kunstwahre und das Naturwahre völlig verschieden sei, und dass der Künstler keinesweges streben sollte noch dürfe, dass sein Werk eigentlich als ein Naturwerk erscheine?"

[36] *Werke*, vol. XXXIII, p. 55: " . . . . von ruhigen, treuen, eingeschränkten Menschen."

[37] *Über das Verhältniss der bildenden Künste zu der Natur*, *Werke*, vol. VII, p. 301: "Wollte er sich aber mit Bewusstsein dem Wirklichen ganz unterordnen, und das Vorhandensein mit knechtischer Treue wiedergeben, so würde er wohl Larven hervorbringen, aber keine Kunstwerke."

[38] Weimar ed., Pt. I. vol. XLII,[2] p. 119: "Das Zufällig-Wirkliche, an dem wir weder ein Gesetz der Natur noch der Freiheit für den Augenblick entdecken, nennen wir das Gemeine."

"in that it presents the object in this moment, withdraws it from time and causes it to display its pure being in the form of its eternal life."[39] Schiller was equally emphatic: "Only the aesthetic state is a complete whole in itself, for it unites in itself all conditions of its source and of its duration. Here alone we feel ourselves, as it were, swept out of time, and our humanity expresses itself with purity and integrity as if it had not experienced any interruption by the operation of an external power."[40]

It is because of these reasons, that the artist, as one who is truly free and removed from all constraint, who, though in touch with nature and the ideal, is undetermined by either, yet fully aware of the power of each, who is freely active and indifferent as in play, and who is consequently of no time but of all time, cannot devote himself to the service of his age or country. It is true that some of these men such as F. Schlegel and Schelling reconcile the age and eternity in the artist, but they do it by making each indifferent to the other, and not, as in imitative art, the former as a means to the latter's end.

But one and all, Schiller, Goethe (with occasional lapses), Schlegel and Schelling, urge the artist to beware of ends, of service to any cause or institution, whether it be that of science or of ethics, of church or of state. "Art cannot," declared Schelling, "without forfeiting the nobility of its nature direct itself to any outward end."[41] Earlier in his *Philosophy of Art* he had written "Poetry has no end outside of itself."[42] Friedrich Schlegel in accordance with the advanced pluralism of his age, argued that wit and virtue and love, as well as art, are ends in themselves.[43]

[39] *Über d. V. d. b. K.*, vol. VII, p. 303: "Die Kunst, indem sie das Wesen in jenem Augenblick darstellt, hebt es aus der Zeit heraus; sie lässt es in seinem reinen Sein, in der Ewigkeit seines Lebens erscheinen."

[40] *Brief* XXII: " . . . nur der ästhetische [Zustand] ist ein Ganzes in sich selbst, da er alle Bedingungen seines Ursprungs und seiner Fortdauer in sich vereinigt. Hier allein fühlen wir uns wie aus der Zeit gerissen; und unsre Menschheit äussert sich mit einer Reinheit und Integrität, als hätte sie von der Einwirkung äusserer Kräfte noch keinen Abbruch erfahren."

[41] *Über d. V. d. b.K.*, vol. VII, p. 327: " . . . . denn sie (die Kunst) kann sich, ohne den Adel ihrer Natur aufzugeben, nach nichts Äusserem richten."

[42] *Ph. d. K.*, vol. V, p. 639: "Die Poesie hat nie einen Zweck ausser sich . . . . ."

[43] *Jugendschriften*, vol. II, p. 191, *Lyc. Frag.* 59: "Witz ist Zweck an sich, wie die Tugend, die Liebe, und die Kunst."

"To require moral ends of the artist is to destroy his profession,"[44] was Goethe's answer in *Dichtung und Wahrheit* to what he believed a pernicious theory of Sulzer, which taught that the artist must consciously exert an ethical influence.[45] Schiller justified his antagonism to the artist who tried to be a reformer, by urging him to beware, to examine himself "to see if these disorders of the moral world wound his reason, or if they do not rather wound his self-love."[46] He begged him as an artist, to forsake the world as it is, and its maxims, and to rise in freedom above himself to the contemplation of the eternal moral world.[47] The cleavage between artists and the masses of men was so marked by the time of Friedrich Schlegel, owing largely to antagonism to some of the doctrines of Fichte and Schelling, that many men had come to regard art and philosophy as destroyers of religion and morals. In his curiously obscurantist fashion, Friedrich Schlegel combatted this tendency. "You wished to annihilate Philosophy and Poetry," he wrote, "in order to make way for religion and morals which you did not comprehend; however, you have been able to destroy nothing but yourself."[48] Schiller lamented the fact that art is banished "from the noisy Vanity Fair of our time," and that "the spiritual service of art has no weight."[49] He ascribed this condition to men's devotion to utility and to science, both of which are in the domain of the understanding. Only that avails, he said, which serves a purpose,

[44] *D. u. W.*, vol. XXIV, p. 112: " . . . aber moralische Zwecke vom Künstler fordern, heisst ihm sein Handwerk verderben."

[45] cf. A. W. Schlegel, in F. Schlegel's *Jugendschriften*, vol. II, *Ath. Frag.* 106: "Die moralische Würdigung ist der ästhetischen völlig entgegengesetzt. Dort gilt der gute Wille alles, hier gar nichts. Der gute Wille witzig zu sein, zum Beispiel, ist die Tugend eines Pagliass."

[46] *Brief* IX: "Aber befragte er sich auch, ob diese Unordnungen in der moralischen Welt seine Vernunft beleidigen oder nicht vielmehr seine Selbstliebe schmerzen?"

[47] *Brief* IX.

[48] *Jugendschriften*, vol. II, *Ideen*, No. 90: "Du wolltest die Philosophie zerstören, und die Poesie, um Raum zu gewinnen für die Religion und Moral, die du verkanntest; aber du hast nichts zerstören können als dich selber." The interpretation of this passage will be clearer after we have discussed Schlegel's doctrine of originality.

[49] *Brief* II: "Auf dieser groben Wage hat das geistige Verdienst der Kunst kein Gewicht, und, aller Aufmunterung beraubt, verschwindet sie von dem lärmenden Markt des Jahrhunderts."

or which can be understood in its relation to actuality. The imagination is robbed, he added, "of one province after another and the frontiers of art are narrowed in proportion as the limits of science are enlarged."[50]

It is significant also, and an aid to our understanding of this time's concept of an artist and to our appreciation of the consistency in the main of their views, to see that in addition to excluding service to causes or institutions, they definitely ruled out the stimulation of the emotions, and the excitation of pleasure in the percipient. Delight as an objective rather than as a result, is destructive of art according to Friedrich Schlegel. "Enjoyment must be free," he wrote, "it may never be a means to an end. Intentional delight would be business, and not pleasure."[51] In his criticism of the French Romanticists, Goethe deplored the tendency of some to seek emotional effects, because thereby they degraded their talent and destroyed their capacity for creating art. "But in this chase after outward means of effect," he wrote, "all profound study, and all gradual and thorough development of the talent and the Man from within, is entirely neglected. And this is the greatest injury which can befall a talent."[52] Schiller went so far as to place consciously impassioned or pathetic art (the tragic) on the same plane as didactic or improving art. "There is," he said, "a fine art of passion, but an impassioned fine art is a contradiction in terms. . . . The idea of an instructive fine art (didactic art) or improving (moral) art is no less contradictory, for nothing agrees less with the idea of the beautiful than to give a determinate tendency to the mind."[53] In the last clause we have

[50] *Brief* II: "Selbst der philosophische Untersuchungsgeist entreisst der Einbildungskraft eine Provinz nach der andern, und die Grenzen der Kunst verengen sich, je mehr die Wissenschaft ihre Schranken erweitert."

[51] *Jugendschriften*, vol. I, p. 23: "Er [der Genuss] muss frei, darf nicht Mittel zu einem Zwecke sein. Absichtlicher Genuss wäre Geschäft und nicht Genuss."

[52] *Gespr.*, vol. III, p. 151: "In diesem Jagen nach äusseren Effektmitteln aber wird jedes tiefere Studium und jedes stufenweise gründliche Entwickeln des Talents und Menschen von innen heraus ganz ausser Acht gelassen. Das ist aber der grösste Schaden, der dem Talent begegnen kann."

[53] *Brief* XXII: "Eine schöne Kunst der Leidenschaft gibt es; aber eine schöne leidenschaftliche Kunst ist ein Widerspruch . . . . . Nicht weniger widersprechend ist der Begriff einer schönen lehrenden (didaktischen) oder bessernden (moralischen) Kunst, denn nichts streitet mehr mit dem Begriff der Schönheit, als dem Gemüt eine bestimmte Tendenz zu geben."

the key note to the conception of artistic autonomy as it is derived from Schiller. If the artist "seeks to give a determinate tendency to the mind" he unconsciously confesses that he has crossed the boundaries of the imagination's domain. When his effort is expended on an attempt to impose his feelings or his reason upon the world of reality, he is not free from constraint, he is not indifferent and creating in the spirit of play, and what he makes is not an appearance where life and form are in semblance one. Only the understanding recognizes purposes; to the reason and imagination, as superior faculties, they have no existence. By refusing to remain within his own sphere, he has both failed to create a work of art, and has not succeeded in being a good moralist or statesman.

Schiller's doctrine of artistic autonomy rests, it may be seen, on three principles: that only in the aesthetic state is there true human autonomy, actual freedom of choice and action; that the creative imagination is the faculty of the soul through which this freedom finds expression; and that the imagination is sovereign within its own domain and recognizes no laws save those which it makes to preserve its purity, its integrity, and its detachment from the spheres of sense, emotions, understanding and reason. In general, it must be clear, the doctrine for which he was sponsor is that of the autonomy of the creative imagination *in abstracto;* the artist is free, not because he is himself, but because he exercises a faculty which can create only under the condition of freedom. Schiller was so convinced of the need of purity and serenity in art that he urged, more commonly than was logically advisable, the elimination of differentiating characteristics. He would free art as far as possible from the limitations imposed by its division into genera and species. When "the different arts come to resemble each other more and more in the action which they exercise on the mind,"[54] they have risen, he believed, to a higher elevation than is possible by keeping them within the limits of a particular type. He also advised the artist to transcend other limits, "to triumph over those which are inherent in the particular subject of which he treats."[55] The artist, he added, must forego

[54] *Brief* XXII: " . . . . dass . . . die verschiedenen Künste in ihrer Wirkung auf das Gemüt einander immer ähnlicher werden."

[55] *Brief* XXII: " . . . . auch diejenigen [Schranken], welche dem besondern Stoffe, den er bearbeitet, anhängig sind, muss der Künstler durch die Behandlung überwinden."

his individuality as he approaches the higher state of personality, his finite character as he approaches infinity and form.[56] He went further, it seems, than any of his contemporaries in his attempt to remove the artist from all limitations except those inherent in the play of his creative imagination. Because of this, he came to be regarded by those who survived him as so rigid and abstract in his teachings that he would destroy life in art at the expense of form.

In 1794, one year before Schiller published his *Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen*, Fichte had brought out his *Grundlage der gesammten Wissenschaftslehre* in which he expounded his doctrine of the Ego and Non-Ego. That Schiller knew this work is very evident from the Letters, in which he regarded the reconciliation in consciousness of the Ego and the Non-Ego as one of the characteristics of the aesthetic state. But it is equally apparent that it failed to give him any interest in a possible theory of the autonomy of the artist as an individual. That addition to the connotation of the term came as Fichte's influence increased, and as his contemporaries, Schelling and Friedrich Schlegel, developed an enriched conception of the artist.

Fichte's doctrine of the Ego, although not always consistently interpreted by him, in the main asserted that each human being as a unique complex is capable of approaching the Infinite Idea, if he voluntarily frees himself from such encroachments of Nature —or the Non-Ego[57]—as interfere with his development, and if, thus self-limited and self-directed, he surrenders himself to necessity in so far as it is the means by which he will attain freedom and self-realization. At the beginning of his conscious life, man is moved by his native instincts, by the blind leadings of his spiritual nature, but finds himself thwarted by that which is not himself, or of himself, his Non-Ego. As he progresses, he also becomes aware that it is in following these leadings that he is losing his freedom. Only when he has recognized the constraint of his instinct as constraint and has accepted it as a guide, does he become equal to the task of creating himself. Directed by it, he can gather into his personality as much of the richness and the

[56] *Briefe* XI—XII.

[57] Fichte did not consistently follow this definition of the Non-Ego. This exposition is largely based on *Die Bestimmung des Menschen* (1800).

variety of the world beyond as suits his needs, and, at the same time retain and develop that unity which is himself. With instinct robbed of its slave compelling power, and the Non-Ego deprived of its capacity to hinder and viewed rather as an instrument of self-creation, he has made himself free within his accepted limitations. Instead of being a work of Nature, he is distinctly a creator of his own self-sufficiency.[58] Fichte, like Schiller, who may have been his disciple in this connection, often opposed individuality and personality to each other. The former he regarded as the distinguishing quality of man in a state of necessity, the latter that of man in a state of freedom. In either condition, a man is peculiar, but he is a nobly self-sufficient, truly autonomous, integrally valid being only when he is consciously self-directed and has, by voluntary surrender to the obstacles opposed to him, freed himself from the domination of instinct and external nature. He has lost himself only to gain himself.

Fichte's view of history as a progressive revelation of the absolute through a series of unique personalities is also important in this connection. Not only did it justify and emphasize differences, in great men and artists who had come before, and in periods of history or of art, but it also gave to the future a doctrine which stimulated men's confidence in their peculiarities and in their capacity for unique contributions to art or philosophy. Its influence as a stimulus to production in the nineteenth century school of *art for art's sake* is comparable only to its influence in the reinterpretation of artistic and political history.

The channels through which the doctrines of Fichte reached the artists immediately were in the main the aesthetic writings of Schelling and Friedrich Schlegel. There were many others who assisted, but since this study is definitely limited to a few striking figures who sum up the thought of the time, only one other, Goethe, will be considered. One of the immediate results of the Fichtean teaching was a new theory of original genius. To distinguish this from the Storm and Stress conception, we must notice that, though instinct was still regarded as un unaccountable

[58] *Die Bestimmung des Menschen, Sämtliche Werke*, vol. II, p. 256: "Ich bin durchaus mein eigenes Geschöpf. Ich hätte blind dem Zuge meiner geistigen Natur folgen können. Ich wollte nicht Natur, sondern mein eigenes Werk sein; und ich bin es geworden, dadurch dass ich es wollte."

gift of nature, it was held to be artistically inoperative until consciously realized and accepted as a guide. An artist who follows it blindly deprives himself of the power to create in freedom, and ranges himself with instinctive creatures such as animals instead of lifting himself to the heights possible to humanity.[59] If he accepts it as a guide, by a free act of the mind he has destroyed his slavery to it and made it his servant and the instrument by which he may approach to his unique vision—or apprehension of the Absolute.[60]

More than Schlegel, Schelling emphasized the divine origin of genius. "It is, as it were, a fragment of Divinity."[61] Consequently, he belittled the war with destiny, the struggle to attain personality which Schlegel believed so essential to the highest achievement of man, especially of the artist.[62] At times, in spite of marked differences, Schlegel came close to Schiller in his belief that the artist rather than the philosopher is distinctly a creation of the conditions in which man as man finds himself, and is therefore, necessarily, the one who has attained humanity's climax. The effect of Schelling's attitude was to make men think of the artist as inspired and divinely aided; that of Schlegel's to make them think of him as the concrete ideal human being, vastly superior to the ordinary man, yet man and not spirit, and as one who has not only conquered necessity but also learned to despise men who submit.[63] Enjoyment of his self-sufficiency, contempt for vulgar inadequacy and cowardice, these were inherent qualities in Schlegel's conception of the artist. The divorce between him and humanity, so often noticed in the school of *l'art pour l'art*, though not philosophically essential to its theory, has, I hope it is clear, in part at least, a philosophical origin.

To these men the prime requisite of a true artist, was originality. Schelling spoke of the creative faculty as the "power of individuation."[64] "Art is a wholly peculiar activity of the human

[59] F. Schlegel, *Jugendschriften*, vol. I, p. 97.

[60] *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 119.

[61] *Ph. d. K.*, vol. V, p. 460: "Es [das Genie] ist so zu sagen ein Stück aus der Absolutheit Gottes."

[62] *Jugendschriften*, vol. I, pp. 95-7. Cf. Goethe, *Gespr.*, vol. I, p. 77.

[63] e.g.: *Jugendschriften*, vol. II, *Lyc. Frag.* 87 and 108.

[64] *Ph. d. K.*, vol. V, p. 386: "Sie (die Einbildungskraft) ist . . . . die Kraft der Individuation."

spirit," wrote Schlegel, "which is separated by fixed boundaries from every other manifestation of this spirit."[65] They are always careful, however, to distinguish originality, which they greatly admire, from individuality or singularity (*Partikularität*) and subjectivity (*Subjektivität*), which they contemn. What they asked for in art is not the partial vision, which may be confused or one-sided, but the vision of the whole even though it is apprehended from a very limited point of view. It is imperative that every one see from his own *Standpunkt*, Schlegel argued,—there can be no artist who sums up all of art;[66] but to attain this end it is equally imperative that an artist should not be content with his natural endowment which makes him individual, but that he should rise from his incomplete and inchoate state to that of perfect self-realization. When he remains as nature made him, he never attains even to an apprehension of the Absolute except in fleeting glimpses which give him no perception of it as it is. He is never free until he has a view of his world as a whole, until he can see it objectively and apart from himself. Subjectivity is the mark of his being conditioned by nature; objectivity is the result of his freedom and self-creativeness.[67]

The law of a work of art, Schelling declared, is that "the more original it is, the more universal it is."[68] Because they were often confused Schlegel found it necessary to distinguish this aesthetic universality from logical universality, "unconditioned imperative universal validity."[69] In artistic representation the ideal appears through the medium of a concrete and tangible image or series of images, which can never be regarded as essential to all representations of the ideal or the universal similarly viewed. When logical universality is demanded, this concrete medium is effaced, or so robbed of its peculiar features that it loses its distinctness and charm and remains nothing more than a logical concept, a dim image of the average in no way suggesting the ideal. Beautiful

[65] *Jugendschriften*, vol. I, p. 119: "Die Kunst ist eine ganz eigenthümliche Thätigkeit des menschlichen Gemüths, welche durch ewige Gränzen von jeder andern geschieden ist."

[66] *Ibid.*, vol. II, *Id.* 114.

[67] F. Schlegel, *Jugendschriften*, vol. I, p. 102: vol. II, *Ath. Frag.* 297.

[68] *Ph. d. K.*, vol. V, p. 447: " . . . . dass gerade je origineller, desto universeller."

[69] *Jugendschriften*, vol. I, p. 153.

art, he urged, is like the speech of God, spiritually one, but diverse in dialects when used by men to communicate the eternal ideas to each other.[70] The artist presents his vision in his own way, asking of his medium only what man asks of language: that it impart truly and beautifully that which he desires to say.

To Schlegel, particularly, a school of artists is inconceivable. There are, he said, *Echo-Künstler* in countless legions who imitate the external peculiarities of a great artist, but they can never become original geniuses themselves.[71] The true artist can neither rule nor serve. It follows then quite logically that, to these men, the law governing artistic creation comes not from without the artist, nor from others, but from himself. Schlegel would have the artist obey the "necessary laws of beauty and the objective rules of art,"[72] which are, in general, no other than those laid down by Kant and particularly by Schiller regarding the exercise of creative imagination. These, as we have seen, proceed from the artist's recognition of his autonomy within his own sphere. They are the bonds which unite all artists in a common activity, and they represent, in a sense, voluntary compacts made by those who are governed by the same aspiration. But the doctrine of artistic originality demands an autonomy which is beyond even the voluntary compact and which is referred only to the individual as an individual. In the ultimate analysis, Schelling and Schlegel as well as Fichte believed, no artist can go beyond himself, beyond his own *Willkür* or freedom of choice. Romantic poetry which Schlegel identifies with all great poetry is, he said, "alone infinite and truly free," for "it recognizes as its first condition that the pleasure of the poet endures no law above itself."[73] "Art and science," wrote Schelling in his treatise *On the Relation of the Plastic Arts to Nature*, "can only revolve on their own axes. The artist like every intellectual operator, can only follow that law

[70] *Ibid.*

[71] *Jugendschriften*, vol. I, p. 102. Cf. vol. II, *Ideen* 45 and 114.

[72] *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 153. "Der Künstler braucht gar nicht allen alles zu sein. Wenn er nur den nothwendigen Gesetzen der Schönheit und den objektiven Regeln der Kunst gehorcht, so hat er übrigens unbeschränkte Freiheit, so eigenthümlich zu sein, als er nur immer will."

[73] *Jugendchriften*, vol. II, *Ath. Frag.* 116: "Sie allein ist unendlich, wie sie allein frei ist, und das als ihr erstes Gesetz anerkennt, dass die Willkür des Dichters kein Gesetz über sich leide."

which God and nature have written in his heart—no other."[74] The conclusion was inevitable: when conscious originality is made the essential quality of fine art, there is no law—except those demanded by the exercise of imagination—but that which is the product of the artist's own intelligence and pleasure.

Benjamin Constant in his *Journal Intime* reported a conversation with Goethe in 1804 which has interest to us in this connection. They were discussing *The Sorrows of the Young Werther* and its influence on the public. Constant quoted Goethe as having said, "But when I write something which pleases me, I care nothing about its consequences."[75] In a parallel passage in Goethe's *Annalen* for 1804 referring, it seems, to this and similar conversations, the German remarked of the Frenchman "my peculiar way of regarding and treating nature and art was not always clear to him."[76] There is good reason to believe that Goethe may have said something more like this: "But when I write something which pleases me, I cannot be responsible for its influence on uncultivated readers." That, at least, is in keeping with much that he had written. For there can be no doubt that he was greatly influenced by the new doctrine of originality.

As a philosophical extension and justification of his earlier critical theory of the characteristic in art, which he attacked in mid-life,[77] it enabled him in his old age to give new significance to his enduring interest in personality in art. "The true artist," he asserted, "rests firmly and securely upon himself."[78] Like his contemporaries, he recognized genius, the unaccountable element in an artist's inspiration, but he never even in his old

[74] *Werke*, vol. III, p. 327: "Kunst und Wissenschaft können beide sich nur um ihre eigne Axe bewegen; der Künstler wie jeder geistig Wirkende nur dem Gesetz folgen, das ihm Gott und Natur ins Herz geschrieben, keinem andern."

[75] *Journal Intime*, le 26 pluviose: "En parlant de Werther il [Goethe] disait: 'Ce qui rend cet ouvrage dangereux, c'est d'avoir peint de la faiblesse comme de la force. Mais quand je fais une chose me convient, les consequences ne me regardent pas. S'il y a des fous, à qui la lecture en tourne mal, ma foi tant pis! ' "

[76] *Paralipomena zu den Annalen*, Zum Jahre 1804, *Werke*, vol. XXX, pp. 399-400: "Mit Benjamin Constant wurden mir gleichfalls angenehme belehrende Stunden. . . . . wenn ihm auch meine Art und Weise, Natur und Kunst anzusehen und zu behandeln, nicht immer deutlich werden konnte . . . . "

[77] e.g.: *Der Sammler und die Seinigen*, Brief VI, 1799. *Werke*, vol. XXXIII.

[78] Weimar ed. Pt. I, vol. XLVII, p. 320: "Der wahre Künstler steht fest und sicher auf sich selbst."

age regarded it as the sole element in creation. At the height of his career and afterward, art was distinctly the product of freedom in the Fichtean sense, of a noble self-consciousness that had learned to trust the unconscious element in the creative process. "Personality," he told Eckermann, "is everything in art and poetry."[79] As is well known, he objected to one-sidedness in literary men and held that many-sidedness, complete self-manifestation, is the goal of all true artists regarded as men.[80]

He urged those who sought his advice to cultivate their peculiar nature, but he warned them that they will succeed in doing so only while they seem to be going out of themselves.[81] . . . Not alone by following the lead of native instinct was personality to be developed; but also by drawing to one's self all that nature, art and humanity had to offer in the way of cultivation. He agreed with Fichte in holding that the true artist and man must free himself from the pettiness and narrowness implicit in singularity. Consequently, he also came to despise subjectivity and to regard it, not, as Schiller had, as a different way of treating artistic material, but as a sign of inferiority, of artistic incapacity. "A poet," he argued, "deserves not the name while he expresses nothing but his few subjective emotions. Only when he can appropriate to himself, and express the world, is he a poet. Then he is inexhaustible, and can be always new. The subjective nature, on the contrary, soon exhausts its meagre inspiration, and is at last ruined by mannerism."[82] Purification of personality, enrichment of it until all its latent possibilities are in flower, these are the demands which the creative capacity makes of the budding artist.

To Goethe this fullness and richness as well as freedom of personality, was a desirable end in itself. It removed him from

[79] *Gespr.* vol. II, p. 128: "Allerdings ist in der Kunst und Poesie die Persönlichkeit alles."

[80] e.g. *Einl. in die Prop.*, vol. XXXIII, pp. 119-122.

[81] *Ibid.*, p. 122: "Jeder wird seine eigne Natur nur desto mehr ausbilden, je mehr er sich von ihr zu entfernen scheint."

[82] *Gespr.*, vol. I, pp. 117-8: "Ebenso ist es mit einem Dichter. Solange er bloss seine wenigen subjektiven Empfindungen ausspricht, ist er noch keiner zu nennen; aber sobald er die Welt sich anzueignen und auszusprechen weiss, ist er ein Poet. Und dann ist er unerschöpflich und kann immer neu sein, wogegen aber eine subjektive Natur ihr Bisschen Inneres bald ausgesprochen hat und zuletzt in Manier zu Grunde geht."

the slavery of temperament and from the irritations of his environment. It destroyed his tendency to subjectivity and increased his freedom and objectivity in imaginative creation. Thereby, he could, like a calm god, look down upon the world of his *Kunstwerk* as one on the outside and not mixed up in it. Like a god he could laugh at it, or be saddened by it, as suited his mood. Goethe seldom if ever claimed this privilege for himself, but he greatly admired it in others,—Merimée[83] and Goldsmith[84] and Möser,[85] for example. He and others called this quality *Irony*. It was in the main expounded by Friedrich Schlegel. It was the natural product of Schiller's theory of the naïve and the sentimental, of the growing tendency to think of the artist as one who plays indifferently between the actual and the ideal; it needed only the Schlegelian doctrine of originality to give it birth.

Through it nineteenth century art, particularly that which is the product of the *art for art's sake* school, received one of its richest sources of inspiration. For it gave philosophical countenance to a belief that art bears an intimate relation to its artist's moods or reactions without reference to their permanent validity. In Schlegel's emphasis on the need of the artist being above his creation, outside of it, self-controlled, self-restrained and yet active, regarding it as an independent and self-subsiste nt whole, and from that point of view, being able to change his *aperçu* or his mood as his pleasure moves, we have the explanation of much that confuses and irritates lovers of older art who find little to enjoy in modern literature.[86]

The capriciousness of Schlegel's ironical artist has been often noted and much misunderstood. What he admired in the true artist was first originality and then irony, the latter only as a concomitant to the essential first element. He gave the original artist alone the privilege of freedom to enjoy his imaginative conception to the utmost, and from any point of view. Since he sees his creation as a whole, he has the right to view it as such and to be variously affected by its manifold qualities. In one of his epigrams, Schlegel said that a work which has not as living a reality and as distinct a personality as a beloved or a friend had

[83] *Gespr.*, vol. III, p. 152.
[84] *D. u. W.*, *Werke*, vol. XXIII, pp. 258-9.
[85] *Ibid.*, vol. XXIV, p. 182.
[86] F. Schlegel, *Jugendschriften*, vol. II, *Lyc. Frag.* 42, 55, 108; *Ath. Frag.* 297.

better remain unwritten, for otherwise it can never become a work of art.[87] As it is the privilege of the lover to regard his beloved from all angles, to be affected by her eternal variety and many charms, and even, if he is free from constraint, to look at her humorously, so it is the privilege of the artist to view his creation from every side, enjoying it and all its reactions, taking it with extreme seriousness or in puckish spirit as his mood urges, because he sees it as it is, and regards it as a whole. In the last analysis, this is but an added reward of his detachment and freedom. It is evident that Schlegel did not admire the serene indifference which appealed to Schiller and Schelling as much as he did the perfect relaxation, the ungoverned play of the spirit which freedom in creation gave the artist. The ideal of Schiller and Schelling is incapable of dogmatism because in his calm unconcern he can take no sides: that of Schlegel is equally undidactic because his ironical mood not only increases his indifference but makes a consistent and eternally valid reaction impossible.[88]

So far, in this discussion of the theories of artistic autonomy, nothing has been said regarding freedom in execution. At first sight, Kant seems to deprive the artist of autonomy in actual representation. Genius, he contended, gives only the material of art; execution requires taste, that is, the talent for beautiful representation that is cultivated in the schools. He advised the young genius to avail himself of the experience of the past, to know the rules, to acquire mechanical skill in execution.[89]

Although it must be frankly admitted that Kant often ranged himself with the formalists, it is clear that such allegiance was not within his final intention. His temporary alignment with the neo-classicists was actually, I believe, the product of his temperamental dislike of the Storm and Stress men and of their Icarian failures. For Kant, idealist as he was, was intensely practical,

[87] *Jugendschriften*, vol. II, *Ath. Frag.* 117: "Werke, deren Ideal für den Künstler nicht eben so viel lebendige Realität, und gleichsam Persönlichkeit hat, wie die Geliebte oder der Freund, blieben besser ungeschrieben. Wenigstens Kunstwerke werden es gewiss nicht."

[88] *Jugendschriften*, vol. II, *Lyc. Frag.* 108: " . . . . Sie [die Sokratische Ironie] soll Niemanden täuschen, als die, welche sie für Täuschung halten, und entweder ihre Freude haben, an der herrlichen Schalkheit, alle Welt zum Besten zu haben, oder böse werden, wenn sie ahnden, sie wären wohl auch mit gemeint. In ihr soll alles Scherz, und alles Ernst sein, alles treuherzig offen, und alles tief verstellt."

[89] *Kr. d. Ur.*, Sec. 47 (entire).

and sought conditions where great results were humanly possible. The condition of *human* success was to him invariably the reconciliation of freedom and necessity, the voluntary acceptance of the intellect's law in the domain of nature. Consequently a work of art must be the product of the free acceptance of limitation. Limitation in artistic representation, as opposed to artistic conception, meant to him the recognition of conditions imposed upon the artist by the need of objectively presenting his imaginative vision. Now to Kant, the ultimate condition of all representation was that the artist should seek to render his form "adequate to his thought without detriment to the free play of his powers."[90] This does not require that he reject the assistance which manifold examples from art and nature can give him; it does mean, however, that the final authority in execution is himself. He only can judge whether the form is adequate to his thought or not. "To content himself, he finds that form which satisfies himself."[91] There is no doubt that in Kant's estimation, there is only one final court of appeal, and that that is the artist's own conscience.

Sometimes, he said, a young and inexperienced author may accept the judgment of others when it is in opposition to his own taste, because he desires applause; but when he matures, and his own judgment is sharpened by exercise, he must, if he be a true artist, follow his own conscience alone and ignore the taste of others. "Taste merely claims autonomy; to make the judgments of others the determining grounds of his own would be heteronomy."[92]

But Kant went even further than this. He not only erected in the artistic conscience the final court of appeal, but he gave the individual choices of the artist in execution (that is, in the

[90] *Kr. d. Ur.*, Sec. 48: " . . . . um sie dem Gedanken angemessen und doch der Freiheit im Spiele derselben nicht nachtheilig werden zu lassen."

[91] *Kr. d. Ur.*, Sec. 48: "Diese Form aber dem Producte der schönen Kunst zu geben, dazu wird blos Geschmack erfordert, an welchem der Künstler, nachdem er ihn durch mancherlei Beispiele der Kunst oder der Natur geübt und berichtigt hat, sein Werk hält, und nach manchen oft mühsamen Versuchen, denselben zu befriedigen, diejenige Form findet, die ihm Genüge thut."

[92] *Kr. d. Ur.*, Sec. 32: "Der Geschmack macht blos auf Autonomie Anspruch. Fremde Urtheile sich zum Bestimmungsgrunde des seinigen zu machen, wäre Heteronomie."

exercise of taste) the sanction of a Categorical Imperative. Possibly in no other connection has he so dignified and exalted the artistic capacity. "All judgments of taste," he said, "are singular judgments,"[93] but "the agreement of a representation with these conditions must be capable of being assumed as valid *a priori* for everyone."[94]

With the development of the theories of artistic autonomy and with the granting to the artist of prerogatives and of freedom beyond those of other men (save the philosopher among the Fichteans), Kant's dicta regarding the artistic conscience and its Categorical Imperative needed no argument. The energy of the later men was expended on the consideration of the qualities which are to be demanded in every true *Kunstwerk*, and to gaining and preserving which, every creating artist must devote himself. All agreed that *Vollkommenheit*, consummateness or perfection, in an aesthetical and not in a logical sense, was the ultimate goal in execution. We all know the passion for this quality in the work of the average *l'art pour l'art* man in the second half of the nineteenth century; we can find a parallel fervor and enthusiasm in Germany around 1800. Greek art was ardently admired because it excelled in this particular.[95] "Perfection," however, is a vague quality which varies in significance from age to age. What were its differentia at this time? They are marked with a fair degree of ease because they were the necessary result of their belief that art is the product of the creative imagination—always, of course, in the sense already defined—and of the unique vision. The first demand on the artist in execution is that he maintain aesthetic appearance, that, on the one hand, his work be free from the intrusions of the real as real, and that, on the other hand, it be freed from the domination of the intellect and not sacrificed to the requirements of thought. In other words, a work of art, to satisfy its artist, must have *purity*, which is freedom from anything that is foreign to its essential nature, and it must have *integrity*, a completeness within its own limitations, that makes it

[93] *Kr. d. Ur.*, Sec. 37: "Daher sind auch alle Geschmacksurtheile einzelne Urtheile . . . . . "

[94] *Kr. d. Ur.*, Sec. 38: " . . . . so muss die Übereinstimmung einer Vorstellung mit diesen Bedingungen der Urtheilskraft als für Jedermann gültig *a priori* angenommen werden können."

[95] e.g. F. Schlegel, *Jugendschriften*, vol. I, p. 22.

independent and self-subsistent. The second demand, realized as we have seen by men who came after Schiller, was that the artist make his work the product of his personal vision; in other words that it have originality or *peculiarity*. Purity, integrity, peculiarity, these were the tests and, in general, the only tests which the spirit of art for art's sake criticism in the period we are discussing, and in the later and better known one, permitted friend or foe to apply. The earlier men, with the possible exception of Goethe, were not so concerned with their application by critics as they were by the artist himself, who, obviously, was the only one in their estimation who could finally determine whether his *Kunstwerk* was pure, whole and peculiar.

That his task, the attainment of aesthetic perfection, was not an easy one, was universally admitted. Kant opposed the Storm and Stress men in this particular of the controversy. "This form is not, as it were, a thing of inspiration, or the result of a free swing of the mental powers, but of a slow and even painful process of improvement,"[96] he argued. Although Goethe believed that the appearance of ease was desirable in art, he taught that it was not in any sense to be gained by facility in expression. "All tendency to easy contentment destroys art,"[97] he wrote in notes for a paper on Dilettantism, a habit of mind that he despised because it "brings in indulgence and favor." He also complained that "at the expense of true artists it brings into notice those that stand nearest to Dilettantism." In his *Introduction to the Propylaea* he exerted his influence to show that where facility is honored, and the details and principles of execution are ignored, true art wanes. To him quite consistently after his divorce from *Sturm und Drang*, the noblest talent found, as he said, "its highest satisfaction in the execution."[98]

"The excellence of a work of art," wrote Schiller, "can only consist in its greater approximation to its ideal of aesthetic

[96] *Kr. d. Ur.*, Sec. 48: " . . . . daher diese nicht gleichsam eine Sache der Eingebung oder eines freien Schwunges der Gemütskräfte, sondern einer langsamen und gar peinlichen Nachbesserung ist . . . "

[97] Weimar ed., Pt. I, vol. XLVII, p. 302: "Alles Vorliebnehmen zerstört die Kunst und der Dilettantismus führt Nachsicht und Gunst ein."

[98] *Gespr.*, vol. I, p. 66: "Das echte, wahrhaft grosse Talent aber findet sein höchstes Glück in der Ausführung."

purity."[99] The great author, according to Fichte, "does not think he has attained anything until he has attained all,—until his work stands before him in the purity and perfection towards which he has struggled . . . . . so long as he is not conscious of this absolute freedom and purity [peculiarity] he has not attained his object, but still works on."[100] Both of them, it will be seen, identified artistic consummateness and purity, but Schiller thought of purity as the product of attention to and concentration on aesthetic appearance: Fichte, as the result of the laborious effort on the part of an author to free his work from the alien qualities of his lower self[101] and from the alien elements of another's personality.[102] But both are one in their belief that elimination is one of the chief requisites in artistic execution.

It is interesting to notice, as a result, just one of the specific tests which these men applied to their own work and to that of others. I shall mention only their demand for self-restraint (self-sacrifice) in art. To say everything about a subject is impossible to the original artist, in the theory of Friedrich Schlegel. Limitation is essential. But limitation is possible only where man has capacity for limitless expansion,—that is, either in the length or in the breadth of his vision, "in den Punkten und an den Seiten." He can so distribute his interests that he destroys his capacity for self-realization, the basis of art; or he can so concentrate them that, by his very sacrifice, he gains a vista into the Absolute, a vision that is his own and no other's.[103] Self-control, self-limitation, is the very condition of artistic perfection. "A work is finished [perfected]," he wrote, "when it is limited at every point, yet within its borders is without limitation and inex-

[99] *Brief* XXII: " . . . . so kann die Vortrefflichkeit eines Kunstwerks bloss in seiner grössern Annäherung zu jenem Ideale ästhetischer Reinigkeit bestehen . . ."

[100] *Über das Wesen des Gelehrten, Werke*, vol. VI, p. 446: "Er glaubt nicht, dass ihm Etwas gelungen sei, bis ihm Alles gelungen ist, und bis sein Werk dasteht in der angestrebten Reinheit und Vollendung . . . So lange er dieser absoluten Freiheit und Reinheit sich nicht bewusst ist, hat er nicht vollendet, sondern arbeitet fort."

[101] *Ibid.*: "Ohne alle Liebe für seine Individualität, treu hingegeben an diese Idee, die fortdauernd ihn erleuchtet, erkennt er mit sicherem Blicke alle Reste seiner alten Natur in dem Ausdrucke der Idee für das, was sie sind, und streitet unablässig mit sich selbst, sich von denselben frei zu machen".

[102] *Ibid.*, p. 447: "Auch die Persönlichkeit Anderer gilt ihm der Wahrheit und der Idee gegenüber nicht mehr, als sein eigene."

[103] *Jugendschriften*, vol. II, *Lyc. Frag.* 37.

haustible, when it is quite truly itself, everywhere homogeneous and yet exalted over itself."[104]

At the same time that the artist refuses, as Young's Shakespeare, to mix any water with his wine, he must keep his wine unclouded and unadulterated by impurities from the very source of his inspiration. "In order to write well on any subject," Schlegel added, "the author must free himself from all personal interest in it; the thought which he is to express with high seriousness must already have lost its immediate attraction, must no longer actually occupy him. So long as the artist is under the sway of imagination and poetic rapture, he is not in a proper condition to communicate what he has to say. He will, in that case, be tempted to say everything . . . . . One who yields to such a temptation fails to recognize the value and merit of self-restraint, which, as we know, is the first and last, the most necessary and the highest quality that every artist and every man ought to cultivate."[105]

It is interesting here to notice not only how essential is the elimination of that which does not pertain to the artist's peculiar vision, but also how imperative is the demand for intelligence and thoroughly awakened consciousness in artistic execution. It is true that Schlegel went much further than Schelling in his dislike of the unconscious element in artistic ecstasy, but it is equally true, I believe, that here again he more closely resembles the late *art for art's sake* men in giving the artistic conscience almost complete autonomy in his doctrine of self-control as the highest and most significant quality in art. We have plenty of evidence that Goethe agreed with him here also. Only one instance will be noted. In his *Autobiography*, the great German described enthusiastically yet regretfully the German poet Günther, who might have been the great artist of his time. He had every quality

[104] *Ibid.*, vol. II, *Ath. Frag.* 297: "Gebildet ist ein Werk, wenn es überall scharf begränzt, innerhalb der Gränzen aber gränzenlos und unerschöpflich ist, wenn es sich selbst ganz treu, überall gleich, und doch über sich selbst erhaben ist."

[105] *Jugendschriften*, vol. II, *Lyc. Frag.* 37: "Um über einen Gegenstand gut schreiben zu können, muss man sich nicht mehr für ihn interessiren; der Gedanke, den man mit Besonnenheit ausdrücken soll, muss schon gänzlich vorbei sein, einen nicht mehr eigentlich beschäftigen. So lange der Künstler erfindet und begeistert ist, befindet er sich für die Mittheilung wenigstens in einem illiberalen Zustande. Er wird dann alles sagen wollen . . . Dadurch verkennt er den Werth und die Würde der Selbstbeschränkung, die doch für den Künstler wie für den Menschen das Erste und das Letzte, das Nothwendigste und das Höchste ist."

essential to greatness in poetry except one, said Goethe, as he enumerated them, and that one was, "he did not know how to curb himself, and so his life, like his poetry, came to naught."[106]

The main elements of the theory of the artist as realized in whole or in part by such men as Kant, Schiller, Goethe, Schelling and Friedrich Schlegel, as well as by a number of others necessarily excluded by the fixed limits of the discussion, are now before us, at least in their salient characteristics. The emphasis in the evolution of this concept, it may be seen, has all along been placed not only on the artist's freedom, but also on his recognition of law. His autonomy creates responsibilities which distinguish the artist of this school's conception from the genius of Storm and Stress. This regard for limitation and law which is the outcome of his attainment of freedom and of his consequent capacity to discover the principles that must guide him is not to be confounded with any known species of formalism. Because of his freedom, also, he imposes upon himself the demand of perfection in his work, one more compelling, and at the same time more stringent, more exacting, it was believed, than that of any school hitherto known. It is this transcendent union of freedom and restraint, of liberty and of order that, in the estimation of these men, marks the true artist and him alone.

[106] *D. u. W.*, vol. XXIII, 61: "Er wusste sich nicht zu zähmen, und so zerrann ihm sein Leben wie sein Dichten." Cf. Goethe's account of Byron. *Gespr.*, vol. I, pp. 99-102.

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